



## PUPPY MILLS GO GLOBAL BORDER PUPPIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

**Background.** Thousands of puppies are smuggled annually into the United States for illegal sale and profit. Large numbers are sold in LA County. Generally these puppies are small purebred breeds, such as Maltese, Yorkies, and Shih-tzus, but may be of any breed. Some are sold as toy breeds, when in fact they are simply underage (4-5 weeks) and may have difficulty eating solid food. Sales often occur at swap meets and through classified ads and are usually cash-only. The parents are generally unavailable for observation.

**Health Risks.** These puppies come primarily from Mexico and parts of Asia, areas where canine rabies is still prevalent. Many are infected with parvovirus, dermatophytosis, internal parasites, and other infectious diseases.

**Surveillance.** LA County VPH is beginning to track illnesses in illegally imported "Border Puppies" due to the potential risks they pose for animal and human health in the County. Please inquire about the origins of all new puppies and report any illnesses in animals you suspect to be "Border Puppies". The relevant form can be found in the Reporting Forms section.

NOTE: Legally imported puppies that die during the quarantine period must be tested for rabies.

Thank you for your assistance  
in this effort!



Photos courtesy of Capt. Aaron Reyes, Border Puppy Task Force